

REMARKS

Claims 1-33 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 11, 12, 15 and 33 are amended. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1, 11, 12, 15 and 33 are amended to clarify and better recite the claimed features.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication on page 5, item 9 of the Office Action that claims 4-6, 8-9 and 12-28 recite allowable subject matter.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

I. REPLY TO REJECTIONS

A. §112, SECOND PARAGRAPH

On page 2, item 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as allegedly indefinite. Claims 1, 11, 12, 15 and 33 are amended to obviate the rejection. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

B. §102 REJECTION

On page 3, item 4 of the Office Action, claims 1-3, 7, 10, 11, 30 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over WO 99/42730 to Koth et al. (hereinafter “Koth”, with U.S. Patent No. 6,349,801 to Koth used as a translation). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Koth fails to disclose an actuator, wherein the screw mechanism comprises a nut and a screw, of which the screw is rotatably supported relative to the housing, such that upon relative rotation of the nut and the screw, a linear movement of said screw is obtained, as recited in claim 1.

Koth discloses an actuator having a rotor 26 which by means of a feather key 34 is connected to the screw. Koth discloses that the screw spindle 36 is accommodated in the collar 30 of the rotor (col. 4, lines 52-53). Koth specifically discloses that the screw spindle

36 is secured against rotation by means of a feather key 34 acting as an anti-rotation means (col. 4, lines 53-55).

Furthermore, Koth discloses linear movement of the nut 42, and not the screw spindle 36 (col. 5, lines 23-24).

As recited in claim 1, a rotatable component of the drive such as a rotor is rotatably supported with respect to the screw, and there is linear movement of the screw. Therefore, claim 1 is patentably distinguishable from Koth, which lacks the recited features. Claims 2, 3, 7, 10, 11, 30 and 33, which depend from claim 1, are also patentable for at least the reasons discussed above and for the additional features they recite. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3, 7, 10, 11, 30 and 33 is respectfully requested.

C. §103 REJECTIONS

On page 4, item 6 of the Office Action, claim 29 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Koth, in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,180,146 to Airheart. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that Airheart fails to overcome the deficiencies in Koth, as discussed above for claim 1. Therefore, claim 29, which depends from claim 1, is patentable over the applied references for at least its dependence from claim 1, as well as for the additional features it recites. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 29 is respectfully requested.

On page 4, item 7 of the Office Action, claim 31 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Koth, in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,293,966 to Chaireire. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that Chaireire fails to overcome the deficiencies in Koth, as discussed above for claim 1. Therefore, claim 31, which depends from claim 1, is patentable over the applied references for at least its dependence from claim 1, as well as for

the additional features it recites. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 31 is respectfully requested.

On page 5, item 8 of the Office Action, claim 32 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Koth, in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,089,359 to Tanaka. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

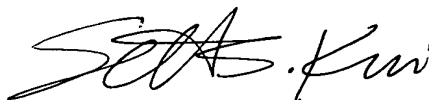
Applicants respectfully submit that Tanaka fails to overcome the deficiencies in Koth, as discussed above for claim 1. Therefore, claim 32, which depends from claim 1, is patentable over the applied references for at least its dependence from claim 1, as well as for the additional features it recites. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 32 is respectfully requested.

II. CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated above, Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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